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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON CAFTA, OCTOBER 15, 2004

1. Editorial in Tegucigalpa-based moderate daily "El Herald" on 10/12, entitled "Towards CAFTA." "The warning about the negative consequences of CAFTA made by the World Bank and the turn this issue may take if Bush loses the November elections should be a matter of concern and of immediate action for the governments of the region, particularly for Honduras."

"Although the toughest opponents of CAFTA, the FTAA and the whole globalization process have been the so-called 'globophobics', a diverse mixture of Orthodox Marxists, conservatives and hard-line nationalists, the truth is that they've now been joined by other moderate sectors that have found flaws in these agreements, as well as agricultural producers that would be the most affected, as has been acknowledged by the WB."

"As a matter of fact, the Democratic candidate for the U.S. presidency, John Kerry, has warned that if he's elected, he'll push for a renegotiation, as was confirmed by Congressmen Dennis Kucinich and Hilda Solis last week."

"The Honduran government needs to create a framework to improve production, to take advantage of open markets, to assist those who would be affected, and to get ready for an eventual renegotiation that would correct the mistakes of the current agreement, which would improve our balance of costs and benefits."

Pierce